

Phase I

Community Outreach and Education

The Morgan Junction community faced a particular challenge in addressing Seattle's Comprehensive Plan. Although the area was designated as an urban village, it had neither a community organization nor a strong community identity. However, neighbors successfully came together and carried out an extensive outreach effort to identify and validate neighborhood issues and to develop a broadly-supported scope of work for Phase II planning,

The Phase I, Organizing Committee developed an outreach plan which included special educational sessions, discussion of the neighborhood planning process at the MoCA monthly general meetings, and supplemental outreach efforts, including written surveys and focus groups. Extensive promotion, particularly two mass mailings, newspaper announcements, and numerous flyers posted throughout the business district, brought good attendance at the events. At each of the educational sessions, the community was asked to describe its vision of the future, and then list and prioritize its concerns and desires. MoCA also collected information through the use of a written survey which was distributed at the West Seattle Street Fair, several of the educational sessions, and in front of the Thriftway store on weekends.

The backbone of the Phase I outreach effort was the regular monthly MoCA meetings, which were held the second Thursday of each month at Gatewood Elementary School. Each meeting was publicized in advance in the West Seattle Herald, with key agenda items noted. At each meeting, attendees were brought up to date on the progress of MoCA's outreach and planning efforts, followed by discussion and input from the community,

In the fall of 1996, as the outreach activities were completed, the community input was collected and compiled by the Organizing Committee. An overall vision statement was drafted and the issues considered most important to the community were summarized,

The next step was to take the vision statement and list of issues back to the community for approval before entering into the actual Phase II planning. Two consultants, Mimi Sheridan and Leslie Rankin, were hired to assist with summarizing the public comments and planning and publicizing the "Big Event"--where the community came together to validate the vision and list of issues.

The November 1996 "Big Event" validation meeting was attended by more than 300 people, who voted to select which issues should be addressed in the Neighborhood Plan. They overwhelmingly validated the community vision statement, which emphasized a safe, attractive, pedestrian-oriented neighborhood with an economically viable vital business district (the statement of this vision appears at the beginning of this document). Many participants signed up to work on the Phase II Planning Committee or on subcommittees dealing with specific elements of the Neighborhood Plan.

Elements of Phase I

This section provides greater detail about the key elements and activities addressed during the Phase I outreach/education process.

• IDENTIFICATION OF STAKEHOLDER GROUPS

Early in the project, several analyses were performed to identify the community's stakeholder groups and to develop a targeted plans to reach out to them. Using data provided by the City and independently compiled by MoCA members, seven stakeholder groups were identified:

- homeowners,
 - renters,
 - non- resident property owners,
 - institutional "populations,
 - the physically challenged,
 - business owners, and
 - institutions such as Gatewood Elementary School, retirement homes, and churches.
- For each stakeholder group, specific outreach methods were determined; the implementation of these methods is described below.

OUTREACH ACTIVITIES

The outreach described below significantly increased participation in the planning process. Attendance at MoCA's general meetings increased from 27 in January 1996 to 51 by the end of the year, Representation greatly increased as well, growing from homeowners and a few businesses to active participation by six of the seven identified stakeholder groups.



MoCA also coordinated with surrounding communities. Organizing Committee members attended meetings of the Friends of the Junction planning group and met with them to discuss common interests. They also coordinated with "a planning group at High Point and with the Fauntleroy Community Association to discuss mutual objectives, A MoCA representative regularly participated in meetings of the Southwest District Council.

MAILINGS

Two mass mailings were done, one paid for by the City and one paid out of MoCA's own planning budget. The first, in April 1996, notified everyone in the planning area that the Neighborhood Planning process was beginning and that it was important for them to participate in shaping forming Morgan Junction's future.

The second mailing went to all residents, businesses, institutions, and owners of property within the planning area. It was sent in early November 1996 to advertise the validation "Big Event" on November 16, 1996. This flyer listed some of the main issues that had arisen and included a map showing the proposed urban village and planning area boundaries,

In addition, MoCA maintained a mailing list every person who signed in at any MoCA meeting or event. Numerous additional mailings went to that list, advising of MoCA general meetings and special events.

ISSUE IDENTIFICATION WORKSHOPS

MoCA's first task was issue identification--discovering what the community was concerned about, what people wanted to see changed, and what their vision was of the community's future. The heart of this process was a series of four informational meetings where neighbors came to learn about not only about the Neighborhood Planning process and issues, as well as to discuss their preferences and concerns.

These meetings were widely advertised through eye-catching flyers and posters distributed at neighborhood businesses, apartments, and public places, and through notices published in the West *Seattle Herald*. The four public informational meetings were held in the summer of 1996, during MoCA's regular Thursday evening meetings. The following topics were discussed:

June 13, 1996	Housing, Land-use, and Design Review
July 11, 1996	Traffic and Transportation
August 8, 1996	Public Safety and Utilities
September 12, 1996	Community Life (Parks/Open Space/Parks, Ark/Culture, Business District)

Each meeting began with a slide show overview of the topic with examples from Morgan Junction and introducing the issues to be covered. Resource people then made brief presentations, providing additional more information for participants to consider. The slide show and presentations were followed by a facilitated discussion where participants expressed their ideas, comments, and concerns. The following sections summarize each meeting and the participants' comments,

Housing, Land-use, and Design Review (June 13, 1996)

The first informational meeting focused on housing and land-use, discussing the existing housing stock inside and outside the urban village, development trends, cost and affordability, design guidelines, and Comprehensive Plan requirements. Slides showed the variety of housing options available in Morgan, from small older bungalows to large new homes, duplexes, small apartment houses, and large multifamily complexes. Also discussed were residential densities in the urban village and the planning area, the rising cost of housing, household sizes, and the changes occurring every day as new units are constructed and older homes are remodeled or replaced.

Summary of Participant Comments

- Make sure that new buildings are compatible with the community
- Ensure that multifamily housing fits into the community
- Channel growth along arterials
- 、 Require hidden parking
- 、 Allow duplexes and detached accessory housing in single-family zones
- 、 Limit low-income housing
- 、 Preserve views by limiting building heights and undergrounding wires
- 、 Encourage a diversity of building styles and people
- 、 Encourage owner occupancy

Traffic and Transportation (July 11, 1996)

Traffic and transportation was the topic of the second informational meeting. Much of the discussion focused on King County Metro Transit's presentation of its Six-Year Transit Plan and the process for planning service improvements in West Seattle. Metro intends to conduct focus groups to gather input about the service changes people would like to see. Broader changes are also being planned by the Regional Transit Authority. A representative of the Seattle Transportation Department was also on hand to answer questions and discuss specific transportation improvements suggested by participants.

Summary of Participant Comments

- Address congestion on the West Seattle freeway
- Improve traffic flow
- Address the ferry traffic problem
- Reconfigure and improve the Morgan/California/Fauntleroy intersection for both pedestrians and vehicles
- Increase pedestrian and vehicle safety on residential streets
- Reduce vehicle noise
- Improve bicycle lanes
- Increase and enhance Metro bus service both for both commuting and circulation within West Seattle
- Involve the community in transit planning

Public Safety and Utilities (August 8, 1996)

The August 8 informational meeting focused on public safety and utilities, with speakers from the Seattle Public Utilities Department, Seattle City Light, the Seattle Police Department, and the West Seattle Crime Prevention Center.

Public Utilities Department studies indicate few utility planning issues affecting Morgan, since both the water and sewage systems are capable of handling any growth expected under current zoning. Some routine maintenance and upgrades are planned.

Seattle City Light is continuing its long-term upgrade of the electrical distribution system in order to serve higher population densities throughout the city; they expect to complete the process in West Seattle in eight to ten years. City Light also plans to increase the number of street lights in areas designated as high crime locations areas by the Police Department. One of the neighborhood's primary desires, underground wiring, is not part of City Light's routine upgrades but can be installed wherever all residents agree to bear the cost,

The City Light representative also discussed their plans to "surplus" a substation inside the urban village boundaries at Southwest Morgan Street and the alley east of 42nd Avenue Southwest. This property has potential for conversion to open space or another public use.

A representative from the West Seattle Anti-Crime Council spoke about the local Crime Prevention Center, a drop-in office where the police officers can write reports or complete other police business, saving the time of traveling to the existing South Precinct station on Beacon Hill. The Center also disseminates information about crime prevention to the community. Monthly meetings are held with residents, business owners and local police officers to discuss local public safety concerns and devise solutions.

Two Seattle Police officers who serve West Seattle discussed their schedules and the amount of police coverage in the Morgan Junction area. They encouraged the community to state in its plan the high priority given to a local police precinct, since the City has not yet funded this project. They said that criminal activity in Morgan is comparable to other parts of the city, with car prowls and thefts being most prevalent. Other crimes are lower in Morgan than in other parts of Seattle. They also said that a new captain being assigned to the area is committed to making changes and addressing many of the issues raised.

Summary of Participant Comments:

- Establish a police precinct in West Seattle
- . Increase the police presence in the community
- . Increase community education and involvement
- Enforce traffic and parking regulations
- Develop supportive youth programs
- Increase youth discipline
- Make streets safer at night
- . Increase graffiti prevention

Community Life (September 12, 1996)

The community life informational meeting covered three topics affecting quality of life in the Morgan Junction neighborhood: the business district, arts and culture, and parks and open space,

Business District

Slides of the business district, with statistics about the types of businesses found in Morgan Junction, kicked off the meeting. Lynn Harmon of Prudential/Cayce & Gain Real Estate added further details about the types of businesses usually found in neighborhood shopping areas and their needs. Morgan does not have the large land parcels required by major chain stores but has excellent demographics and sites good locations suitable for smaller stores.

Seattle neighborhoods that have attracted strong local businesses (such as Admiral and Queen Anne) have done so through good demographics coupled with dedicated business and property owners working to reinvest in their community and promote themselves to generate strong support from local shoppers. Some business districts feature a distinctive theme or have specialty stores that attract people from outside the area,

Summary of Participant comments

- Need new businesses such as a bookstore/newsstand, office supplies, antique shops, juice bar, laundromat, funky jewelry and clothes, gifts/post office/photocopying
- Need a greater variety of restaurants
- Implement design guidelines and restrict inappropriate signs to improve the appearance of the business district
- Increase parking, especially behind shops
- . Improve pedestrian atmosphere/safety near shops

Arts and Culture

The second part of the meeting focused on arts and culture in the Morgan community. The slides featured local arts facilities (primarily churches used by the arts organizations), scenic views,

gardens, and public art throughout West Seattle. Inga Carmack of Arts West, a non-profit arts organization serving West Seattle, explained their activities. The Arts West gallery at Jefferson Square features a different artist each month, Arts West also sponsors theater productions in churches and works with local business groups on beautification projects such as street trees, Arts West is also promoting the development of a new arts/performance center to be used as a gallery, theater and public gathering place,

Summary of Participant Comments:

- . Build facilities that enhance arts and culture such as community center and theater.
- Add public art to the community, such as sidewalk tiles or a landmark statue or fountain.

Parks and Open Space

The parks slide show demonstrated that the proposed Morgan urban village currently has no parks within its boundaries. However, several open spaces lie within the planning area, including Lowman Beach Park, Lincoln Park, Gatewood Reservoir, and Gatewood and Fairmount playgrounds. An additional open space, the Pelly Place Natural Area, was acquired after great community effort and will be restored to its a natural state with a City matching grant, A similar natural area is located in the Orchard Street Ravine. Potential spaces for pocket parks were also highlighted. Catherine Anstett and Don Harris of the Seattle Department of Parks and Recreation provided maps of the City's open space projects in the area and provided pointers on how best to plan to for and obtain additional open space and parks,

Summary of Participant Comments

- . Make better use of existing public spaces
- Add amenities such as pocket parks, a community garden, street trees, a skateboard park, and bicycle paths

SPECIAL FOCUS GROUP SESSION

MoCA made specific efforts to involve groups that usually do not attend public meetings or participate in community activities. One such, effort was a focus group at Cal-Mor Circle, a subsidized apartment complex for the elderly located in the heart of the Morgan Junction business district. About 20 percent of the building's 58 residents participated in the focus group, Following a general presentation about" the planning process, residents discussed their concerns and ranked the importance of various issues,

All of the focus group participants' major concerns were related to improving the area's walkability-- making it easier for people, especially those who have difficulty walking, to get around the community easily and safely. Specific suggestions included:

- longer pedestrian signals at crosswalks,
- improved sidewalks and crosswalks,
- more wheelchair ramps,
- better enforcement of traffic regulations,
- storm drain repair to prevent sidewalk flooding,
- improved lighting, and
- a greater police presence,

These concerns were combined with results of the educational workshops and the survey and were included in the issues presented during the November "Big Event" validation open house.

BUSINESS SURVEY

During March 1996, MoCA conducted a detailed survey of all the business districts in the planning area. Follow-up surveys were done in March 1997 and March 1998 to measure changes in the business community over time. The survey collected the following information for each individual business and storefront (or office) in the urban village and planning area:

- the name of the business
- the address/location
- the type of business (including vacant space, but excluding home-based businesses)
- the type and size of space occupied by the business
- the location and availability of parking (both off-street and on-street)

This information was summarized and disseminated to the business community. It also was presented during the informational meetings and the November validation "Big Event."

WRITTEN SURVEY

To reach out to people who do not typically attend meetings, MoCA developed a written survey. The questionnaire was distributed from July to October 1996 at MoCA's regular meetings, at the West Seattle Street Fair, at the Night Out Against Crime in August 1996, and at an information table staffed on Saturdays by MoCA volunteers "at the local Thriftway store."

The survey was based on a similar questionnaire used by other neighborhood planning groups. The questionnaire asked people to list their top priorities in four major areas: housing and land-use, transportation and traffic, public safety, and quality of life. The survey also collected basic demographic information to determine which stakeholder group(s) the respondents represented.

A total of 119 completed questionnaires were received and analyzed by MoCA. Respondents were primarily homeowners (66%) living within the proposed Urban Village (28%) or within the Planning Area (52%). Twenty percent were owners or managers of local businesses. One-quarter of the respondents were bus riders and one-third had children living at home.

The respondents gave the highest importance to reducing violent crime, ensuring that new multifamily housing fits into the community, increased police and emergency services, design guidelines for new construction, and having a range of housing prices available. All of the issues addressed in the surveys were included in the final list of issues presented at the November validation open house; all open-ended responses were also tabulated.

Two important new items were obtained from the survey responses and included in later discussions--establishing a police precinct in West Seattle and maintaining the integrity of single-family neighborhoods.

Validation Of Phase I Efforts

As the outreach activities were completed, the Organizing Committee summarized all the input received from the public and drafting a comprehensive statement of the community's vision of its future. This information was then submitted to the community for approval and to set the agenda for the actual planning to be done during Phase II. Two consultants, Mimi Sheridan and Leslie

Rankin, were hired to assist with summarizing the public comments and to help plan and publicize the "Big Event," where the community came together to validate the vision and list of issues.

The Vision Statement

The first step in summarizing public comments was developing an overall vision statement for public consideration. The comments and ideas from the public meetings, surveys, and focus groups were distilled into a comprehensive statement of the community's vision of its future:

The Morgan Junction Neighborhood Vision

- An attractive community where the buildings, streets, and sidewalks form a comfortable human-scale setting for daily activities and where views and community character are protected;
- A community with strong single-family neighborhoods and compatible multifamily buildings offering a wide range of housing types for all people;
- An appealing place with attractive landscaping and pleasant parks and gathering places;
- A vital commercial district, providing restaurants, stores, and services to meet the needs of local residents;
- A safe community with active crime prevention programs and a strong police presence;
- A community that is conveniently accessible by transit and automobile, but where walking and biking are easy and enjoyable.

This vision statement is identical to the statement which appears on the first page of this Neighborhood Plan.

The Validation "Big Event" of November 16, 1996

The months-long issue identification process culminated in an open house held on November 16, 1996 at Gatewood School. The purpose of this event was to seek community validation of the issues that had been recorded, essentially asking the questions "Did we hear you right?" "Is this what you mean?" and "Which of these concerns are most important to you?" The draft vision statement was also presented for validation.

The validation "Big Event" was extensively promoted in advance. An informational flyer was mailed to all households, businesses, institutions, and non-resident owners of property in the planning area. Copies of the flyer were posted around the neighborhood, in businesses, and in other public places. Notices were placed in the West Seattle Herald. In addition, signs were posted throughout the planning area, using recycled yard signs from the 1996 election campaign.

The day-long validation event was very successful, with more than 300 people participating. Each major topic area had its own display, with photos and information, listing the issues that had surfaced. An Organizing Committee member staffed each table to answer questions. After considering this information, each participant could vote for each issue to show what was important to them.

Participants voted by pasting colored dots next to each item on the list of issues. For each topic area, voters could evenly distribute dots among several issues or place multiple dots next to the issues they felt most strongly about.

Each person received a total of 27 dots for the 51 issues, getting a ration of dots at each station. The number of dots varied among the topic areas, depending on the number of issues in that topic. For example, there were thirteen issues under Transportation and people received seven dots, while they received only three dots to distribute among the six Community/Culture issues. This was done to provide more or less equal weighting of votes among the various topic areas, so that a single composite list of priorities could be developed for all issues across the topical areas.

Final **Issues List**

- The strongest support went to two West Seattle-wide issues: establishing a police precinct and addressing congestion on the West Seattle freeway.
- Within the Morgan Junction area, the greatest concern revolved around housing and growth, especially maintaining existing single-family housing and allowing no more low-income housing in the neighborhood.
- Development of design guidelines for new construction, limiting building heights to retain views, and building a branch library were also highly rated.
- The vision statement was overwhelmingly approved, by a vote of 218 to 25. Many people added comments, primarily stating their desire to retain the existing character of the neighborhood and maintain existing single-family housing.